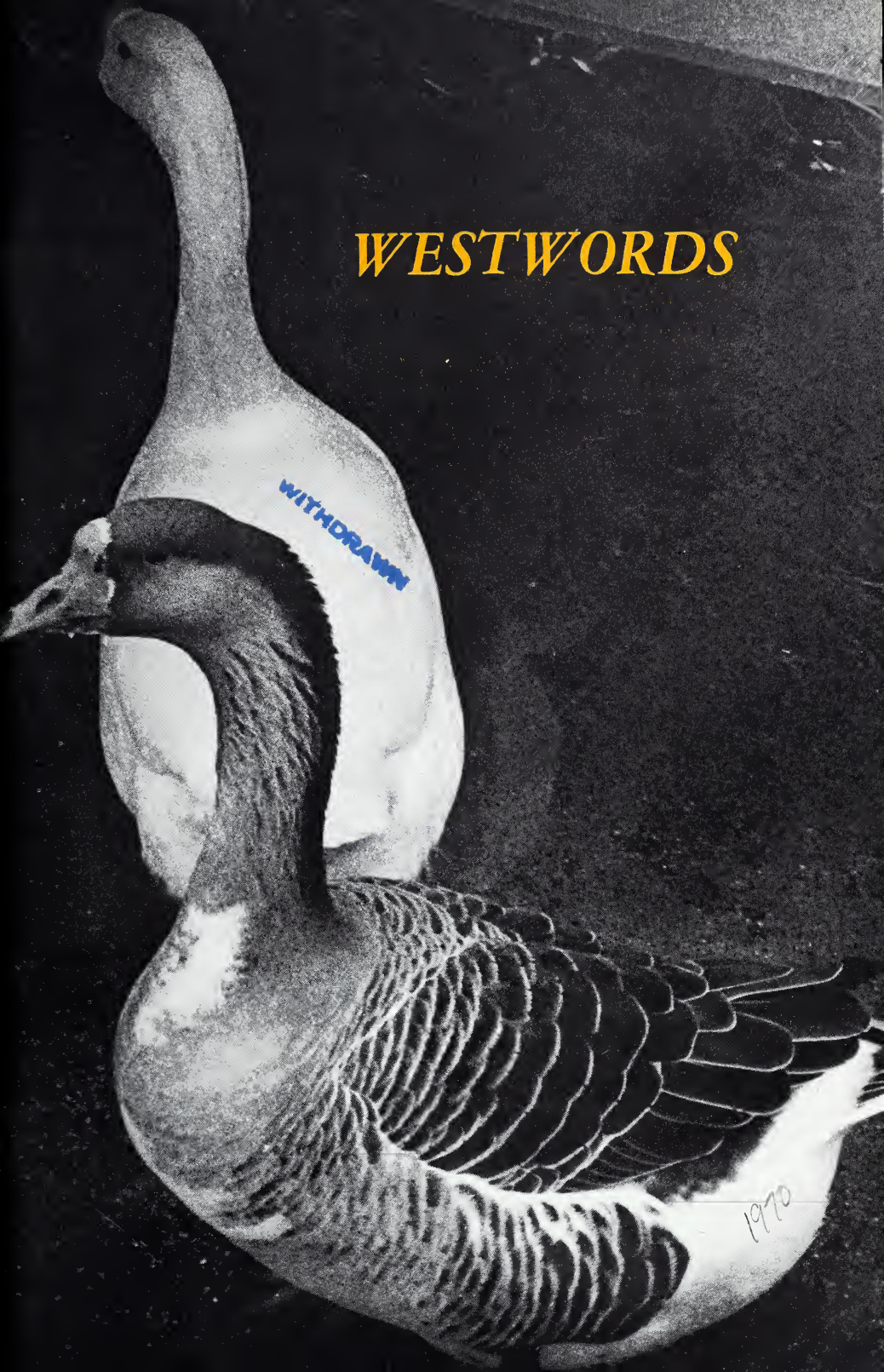
WESTWORDS
WITHDRAWN
1970

Volume 11 – Number 3
September 1969

WESTWORDS is published
quarterly by the students
of Mount St. Mary's College
Los Angeles, California 90049

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Notes From the Editors

Springtime is a season of spontaneous potpourri – myriads of dazzling colors, rich earth smells and a thousand new shapes and textures. Its special magnetism is felt by young and old alike. It is especially a time to indulge in whimsy – a time to take pleasure in the joy of creation and perhaps do a bit of creating yourself.

The poems, stories and drawings in this issue of *Westwords* seem to echo this contagious urge to 'do your own thing'. This mood is reminiscent of e. e. cummings' lines:

Spring is like a perhaps hand
(which comes carefully
out of Nowhere) arranging
a window, into which people look (while
people stare
arranging and changing placing
carefully there a strange
thing and a known thing here)

BP

Catch yourself eating an apple, climbing out of a car, feeling about racism or the person next door, looking at a dress or the wastepaper basket. It's the beginning of creation, this potpourri awareness; and oops, here's *Westwords*. Catch.

CM

WITHDRAWN

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Dragon Peter

This morning we watched the steaming cracks
at last creep around his delicately rose
and warm shell. Our dragon hatched, a minor Krak-
atoa exploding to fragments of flying rose,
with walls and pinkly steaming clouds in rushed
release of prison-pressure. Peter was hatched.
Unfolding slowly from egg-ball of crushed
gold, he blinked a glittering ruby, matched
with other, emerald, eye. His flickering tongue
explored silver scalloped wings and curving
silver claws. Then, flapping wildly, he flung
himself into air, glorious and graceless, swerving
to crash – again and again. Flying was folly, it seemed,
till dragon Peter flew off, with a violet-happy smoke scream.

CATHY HERDERING

Poem-Rhyme-Song

Lions-tigers-panthers-cats
Why does each have a different-varied name?
Caps-helmets-berets-hats
Why can't they all be the identical-same?

I try-endeavor to understand, but I just can't
How someone could be mother-sister-grandma-aunt.
Men-women-children I always meet
Walking down the boulevard-avenue-street.

Coffee-whiskey-root beer floats
Aren't they all for us to sip-drink?
Rivers-oceans-ponds-streams-moats
In any of them we either swim or sink.

With so many words to keep in my brain-mind
It's no wonder-amazement I can not find
The proper-right one through some trick-or-caper
To write-print-jot down on a piece-sheet of paper!

SR. NANCY MARJORIE BARNEY, DMJ

Medea Cinder

Awe crept into our neighbor's garden
that dusty summer; he slipped in at night
to weave a secret net. It was easy to pardon
the sinister spider shape for his jet, splashed bright
with sunspot. Kites forgotten, we
gathered before the miracle of this perfect monster,
and caught by the spell of his star-shaped quiet,
only one left to spread the news of wonder.
Our neighbor, infallible grown-up, came
for awe with safety matches. We watched
in first doubt as sulphur scraped to flame.
Our monster caught fear then, as flame, panic touched
and medea's golden cloak engulfed his jet
to flair, crumple, and fall from smoking net.

CATHY HERDERING

Precipice

HETTY WILKIE

The instructor was grading his students. He came to Brian's record; highest score on the written exam, highest scores in the swimming tests, perfect attendance, no previous experience. Frowning, the instructor lit a cigarette. Brian had all the qualifications. The instructor put his feet on his desk. He really had no quarrel with Brian's work. He was only 21, serious, almost too intent. His record was certainly good. He should be at the top of the list for active duty as a lifeguard. The instructor crushed out his cigarette and dragged it over the ashes until they lay in a neat pile on one side of the ashtray.

He thought of the day he had shown slides of rescues to the class. That day Brian's eyes never left the screen. The slide of a man caught in a rip-tide had flashed, and just then the instructor had glanced at Brian's face. The image of the young man's twisted expression swept back again. Quickly the instructor shoved Brian's folder to the bottom of the stack.

Two days later he posted the seniority list on the bulletin board. Next to this was a notice for the top seven students to report to Personnel to sign their contracts. Within one week all permanent lifeguards were requested to apply for the tower of their choice. Other students would be notified as vacancies occured.

By the following week the permanent lifeguards had filed their requests. Brian had fifth choice and had filed the first application. It was a bright, hot August day when the instructor decided to tackle the assignment list. His assistant had arranged the applications in order of seniority with the assignment book on top. Having just come in from the beach, the room looked dark and small. Quickly he opened the windows

and unbuttoned his shirt. Pulling up his swivel chair, he began. The first four applications were easy enough, and then he got to Brian's. The application said, Precipice Point. Precipice was a small wind-swept one-tower beach to the North. It was encased by black cliffs that, through time, had crumbled into the ocean and were now being reshaped by the surf. No one had ever asked for that lonely, isolated stretch of beach. A beach with a reputation for unexplained occurences. For a time the instructor tried to find a motive for Brian's choice, but it was hot and there were many applications. Carefully he marked Brian's name next to Precipice Point in the assignment book and went on.

After renting a small guest house fairly near the Point, Brian had assumed his duties as lifeguard. The guest house was furnished in ancient scared maple and overstuffed brown chairs. The rooms were exceedingly small and appeared even smaller because of the dark, wood-paneled walls. The few windows had been covered with contact paper by some former tenant; probably the same person who had painted the bathroom purple.

As the days became colder and the surf rose, beach-goers became more and more infrequent. Brian started getting up earlier and spent most of his time on the beach. After closing the tower at five, he would come home to eat. Often he would go back at night and walk along the cliffs.

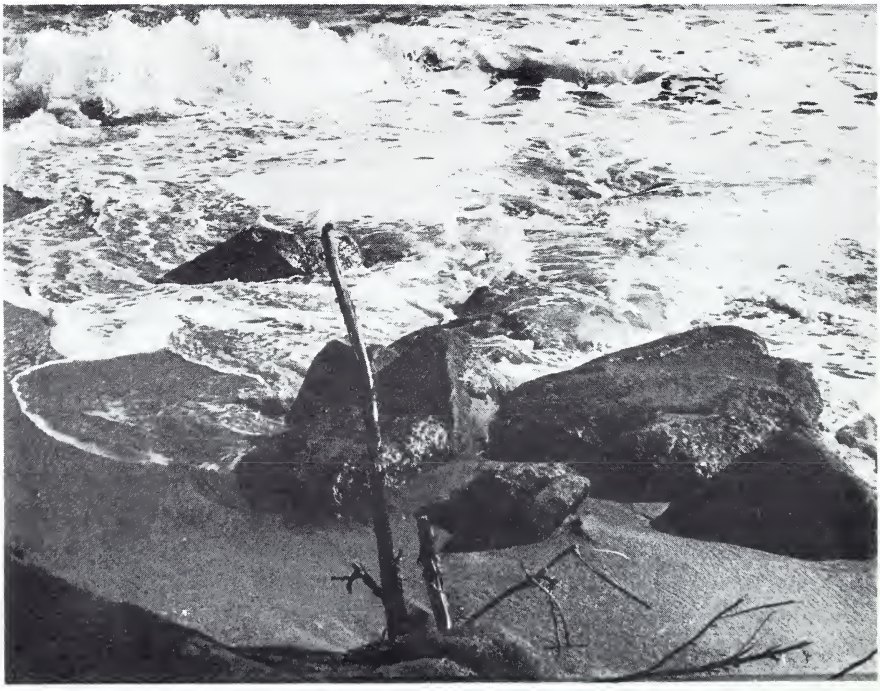
It was late November and a mist, almost as heavy as rain, had settled on the beach. Many troughs and pits had appeared under the surface, and a rip-tide had set in. The sea was rough and grey as steel, blending into the mist so that Brian could barely make out the horizon line. After lowering the warning flag, Brian started to lock up the tower for the night. The solitary figure of an old man appeared in the mist. He was wrapped in a dark green overcoat and had a black wool stocking-cap pulled low on his head. He was bent so that the overcoat hiked up in the back, and he carried a long stick. He used it as a cane, or to poke shells or turn over seaweed. Occasionally he stooped, apparently with effort, to pick some object out of the sand.

Brian's heart beat faster. Climbing onto the tower, he perched there, black as a vulture against the light grey tower. The man hobbled past him, making his way to the point. Brian banged the window shut. With shaking hands he picked up his binoculars and zipped his wind-breaker up to his chin. He focused the binoculars on the old man, who by this time was well out on the rocks. The gnarled hands and the deep creases in the man's face were clearly visible. Wisps of greying hair were sticking out of his cap.

The man's overcoat flapped against his legs. Stiffly shuffling from

rock to rock, he made his way to a large rock partially surrounded by pounding surf. Stooping down, the man reached for something on the side of the rock. Brian saw a wave building and held his breath. As the wave struck the man, his stick flew out of his hands and was swept into the water. Brian sucked in his breath. The man was slipping and skidding on the rock. Just as he was regaining his balance, another wave hit him. He tried to cling to the rock as the wave pulled at him. The scream was barely audible over the roar of the surf. Brian saw the man's face, twisted with fear, and then the water covered him. The dark shape tumbled in the surf. The body struck a rock and an arm jerked up against the sky. Again and again the waves pulled him out and then dashed him against the rocks. Finally the body was rushed into a little eddy and floated listlessly as seaweed.

Putting down the glasses, Brian looked up and down the beach. He saw no one, and it was rapidly getting dark. He locked the tower. His eyes shone. He rubbed his hands together. After all, if the body was still there in the morning, he could report it as a night drowning.



Dakota

We are together
Those of us who have known
Not merely with eyes
The lonesome majesty of the plains,
Snow-swept and blown
Against the cinnamon skies.
Indian summer rains
Drizzle away the story the plains could have shown
And spread them out to dry.

Those of us who know
With more than just the senses
And have felt the untouched blackened Hills,
Finger-splashed the deserts,
And jaunted beside the prairie-dogs –
There is a hunger unknown to the body
When one day we realize how long ago
Since last we stepped
Lightly so,
On lands that must be harnessed with binding fences.

Others do not know.
Memories can not well up
And all but marrow-cry to let go,
There is no deafening call
Nor echo
Unheard by ears
Except to one who knows,
And is reluctant to leave to the howling gale
The sight of the wild prairie rose
And the Flickertail.

SR. NANCY MARJORIE BARNEY, DMJ

The Memory

SHELLEY CAVANAUGH

The doctor started up as he heard the footsteps, but sat down again as they went past, quick steady clicks like the ticks of a clock.

"Relax, Carter," the lawyer suggested. "Jim'll come. You're so nervous, you'd think you were the guinea pig. He's probably quick-talking the guard into changing places with him."

"Yeah, never trust a con. But what if he chickens? Would *you* want to get hit with a shot that could change your whole personality? What if it ruins his mind? What if he goes from hot-tempered to no-temper? What *are* we doing anyway, playing God?"

"You may be playing, only you know that, Doc. But with what? With the feelings, if he has any, of a lousy con who's been in jail more than he's been out, who does what he wants, when, where and how he chooses. And he *chooses* to go through with this. Really, what's he got to lose? He'll show."

In another wing of the prison complex, Jim was doodling on the margin of the newspaper. The guard outside his cell sighed and called, "Bartell, let's go, it's past time."

"Take a walk around the exercise-yard, Peters. I'm busy."

"Doing what? 'Nothing' is about your speed."

Jim bristled at the words. "Writing a letter. What's it to you?"

"Dear Marta," he wrote between the headline and feature article. "I really am going to change, Hon. Change my address, that is. As soon as this farce is over, they'll recommend me for parole." His thoughts wrote on. "You wouldn't care if I did change, would you? Of course I won't, no chance. I'm me and that's what I'll stay." What if he didn't? "I'll see you soon." And if it killed him? "They can't hurt

me. My ghost would come back and slit their throats." And if it wasn't death, but life instead, a quiet, stupid life breathed in a monotone? "Once I'm out, I'll come to you, Mart, so be there, got it?" Please, Marta, please be there.

He scribbled over the words and ripped out the page, crumbling and tearing it. "O.K., Peters, let's go."

Doctor Carter wanted to look irritated when Jim and the guard arrived, but he was too relieved. The lawyer just shrugged towards the clock and opened his attache case. "Red tape, you know," he explained, and then assumed his legal tone. "Dated the twenty-first day of . . . . in the event that . . . . altering basic reactions from violent to tranquil . . . . help fulfill debt to society . . . ."

Jim cut in. "Just let me sign. I've memorized it. As long as Warden's signature is there . . . .?"

"It's there, Jim, it's all legal and above board. We don't operate on the terms you're used to."

Jim ignored the cut in the words. Usually so sensitive to other people's tones, he had not even noticed the sarcasm. Despite the memorization of the terms, he read the papers carefully, then scrawled his name on each copy of the agreement. The lawyer took them eagerly and extended his hand. "Best of luck, Jim." Jim was staring at the reclining chair and the hypodermic needle, but the tone of voice snapped his attention, and he looked up quickly. "You mean that, don't you?"

The lawyer nodded almost without motion.

"Thank you." Jim rested his hand a moment on the arm of the chair, then sat down slowly. Wanting to hold these last moments of his old personality, he clenched every muscle into tense awareness. He felt the chair tilt towards the horizontal, smelt the sharp astringency of the doctor's office, caught a hangnail on his right thumb with his right index fingernail. The needle jabbed into his neck; sharp metal tore the skin and muscle, the fluid whooshed into a vein, colliding and merging with blood. It rushed on, carrying his consciousness with it.

He hurtled on and on, from warmth to coolness to cold, a leaf skimming the water. The water was a stream tumbling down a mountain, down into a lake. The leaf was shredded by water dragging it over stones, but the lake saved the shreds. The fish, too, somersaulted from the angry river into the lake where they rolled leisurely with the gentle laps of water. The little boy splashed around trying to catch them, but he was laughing too hard to be dangerous to them.

"Lolly," he chortled, "Lolly" and "Loo. Looley."

Picking up a handful of water, he sprayed the birds flying low over the lake. The water arched in a lovely rainbow as the sun hit the drops,

then rippled into the pool. "Ona, ona" he breathed.

He ducked down suddenly into the water and came up streaming rainbows, then smothered them in the dusty sand of the shore, rolling over and over until his bare body was tanned with silt. He laughed again as he stuffed his bellybutton with mud.

Night was coming. One bite of sour fruit wrinkled his nose, so he ran to a tree and ate some of the thick sticky goodness that made him thirsty. He turned somersaults to the lake, drank deeply, and fell immediately asleep by the side of the water. Occasionally a wave touched his foot and he twitched it and continued his dreamless sleep.

The sun woke him up early; its brightness burned through his eyelids and he opened them quickly. He breathed very deeply to discover what kind of a day it would be. A warm day – he could smell the sunshine. He tasted sand and water and the petals of trembling flowers – they tasted the same as yesterday, but maybe another day they would be different.

He wished it would rain. He liked the taste of thunder rolling between his teeth and the shiver of lightning piercing the stars. But now he could only hear a leaf fall and the growl of a bee when it stung him. He loved to listen and see and feel; all senses were one to him, and he used it expertly.

One day passed, and another, and more followed, each bringing old things and new ones for him to discover – a bird's song to quiver a flower, or maybe a tall shadow to make an ant think it was midnight at noon.

As he grew older he watched his body grow bigger and he wondered if one day he might grow so big that he would sink the island, as he had seen a gull sink a large leaf floating on the lake. He knew now it was an island, for he had walked around it once. It had taken a long time, but he wanted to know. He had walked, and played for a few days, then walked for a few more, always searching for something, with the sea always at his left. And he finally came back to where he had started. He recognized it with a shout of greeting and a frown of frustration, for he had not found his desire. And he couldn't even tell himself about it because he had only crude homemade words, and he didn't know what he was looking for.

He could swim across the lake in fifty breaths now. It didn't seem so big anymore. His muscles rippled him across. Sometimes he would dive down into the very center of the lake. Eyes wide open, he would look and look.

His next project was to climb the mountain whose melting snow fed the lake. His weather-hardened body could withstand much cold. The young man was determined, but he only climbed partway. Surely his search would not end there – what he wanted was associated with warmth

and his laughter near the lake. He came down slowly, regretfully. There was nowhere else nearby where he could search. And he did not want to lose sight of the lake again.

Time passed. When he talked his language to himself, the voice he heard now was deep and strong. But he seldom spoke, unless to call with the birds who hurled lonely cries to the sunset.

It was at sunset that she came at last. The day had been so long. He didn't know that one day was only a few seconds longer or shorter than the ones before and after it. The sun had crept across the sky, stopping and starting like a lazy turtle. The wind was brushing the trees, making their leaves whisper sadly.

In a last attempt to scare off the darkness, the sun burnished the sky with colors the man could almost hear and feel. She walked out of its last purple and came towards him with half a smile on her lips and the rest in her eyes. Her face frightened him, it was so beautiful.

She stopped a little way from him. He crooked his toes into the sand to hold the place, hold the moment, fix the vision fast in his mind so he could cherish the memory forever.

Jim looked at the fold where the ceiling and wall crossed into each other. The bright whiteness of the room hurt his eyes.

"Nothing," Doctor Carter slashed through the tenseness. "Absolute zero. How do you feel, Jim?"

"Okay."

Dr. Carter stomped over to his desk and scribbled a few short lines:

Dosage: 2 cc's
Injection: 2:45
Loss of consciousness: 2:46
Heart: normal
Pulse: normal
Respiration: spasmodic
Unusual reactions: none
Return of consciousness: 2:53

The lawyer dated another from his sheaf of papers. "If you increased the dosage?"

"Impossible. The danger threshold was reached with 2 cc's. We cannot pass it."

"I see."

Jim stood up. "May I go back to my cell?"

"In a few minutes. I have some questions to complete my preliminary report." The doctor checked his heart, pulse and respiration again, noting the time and scrawling "normal" in each allotted space.

"Did you feel any dizziness, Jim, or shortness of breath?"

"No, nothing." God, less than nothing. Had he even fallen asleep? He was surprised when the doctor told him he had passed out for seven minutes. He had no memory of having even closed his eyes.

"I'm perplexed." Dr. Carter sounded very tired. "But I'll keep trying. I'm convinced this will work – sometime."

Jim shrugged. He had never cared much about the success of the experiment. He only wanted to get a shortcut to freedom, and his act of volunteering had ensured that no matter what the outcome. He didn't give a damn about the rest. Why then did he feel so sad?

The Lizard

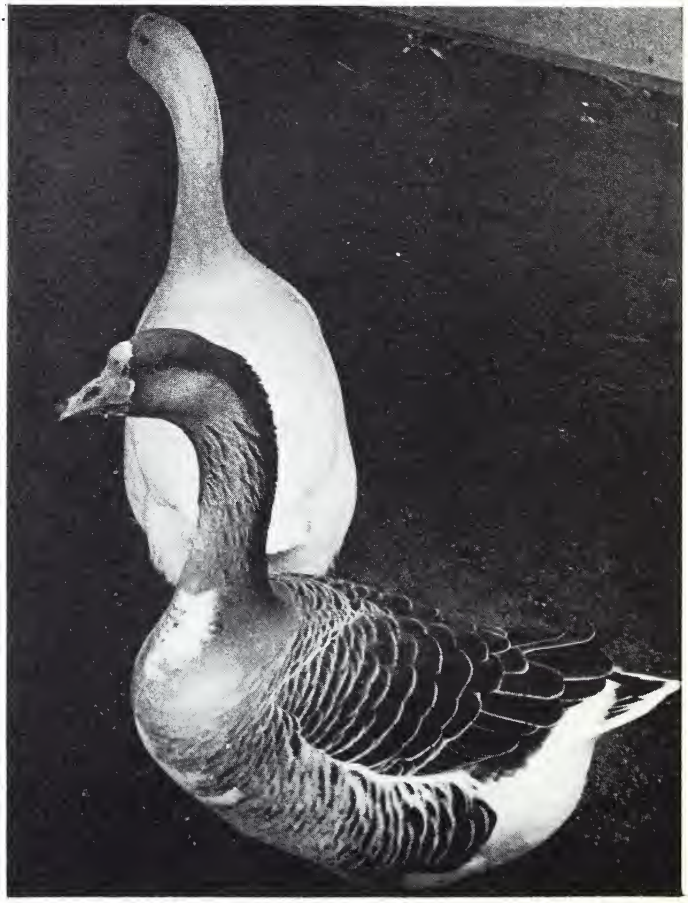
The lizard is the nicest of the reptiles to be seen.
He's grassy green,
Or soil brown.
Or sometimes asphalt grey.
He stays out in the sun all day.
His neck is a balloon.
He'll stand concretely still,
And then you'll see him blowing in and out.
You know what he's about?
A dinosaur that shrunk up in the sun.
The most fun
Is to grab him by the tail.
He's like a snail
With his heart in the middle
And if you fiddle with him he comes apart.
So he lies in the weather till he grows back together.

MARY ANNE BURROUGHS

The Moose

A sad, sober mammal, the moose.
Hunters chase him whenever he's loose.
He often asks why
He has no wings to fly.
Then he'd have as much chance as the goose.

MARY ANNE BURROUGHS



The Wind

I was playing with the wind on February
Day, the wind that approaches on tiptoe
Then blows in your face. I sat in a
Chair and we played hide and seek;
It rustled in a palm and I knew
It was behind me. A little sprig wiggled
On the top of a hedge and I knew it was there
In front of me. I pretended to study but it
Came and it played with my hair. It spanked
The flag and I knew it was there. Some
Little leaves dangled and shook on a
Bush; some others came skipping
On stones along side me.

Then it was quiet, and I wished
it would come.

But it waits sometimes – then tickles
My ears and my spirit lifts and I look
And it comes and cools by my forehead and
Gentles my frown and if it comes strong
I lift up my face and lean into its force
And it tingles and pinches and
Braces my face and I open my mouth
And take in my breath in wonder and awe
And relief and I grin and point up my face
And lean forward again and it blows until
I can't take more.
Then I turn my back to protect my face
And go to the warm to look for a place
Where with knees up to chin as far as they'll go
I can sit and love my windswept glow.

SISTER CATHLENE WELLS, SDSH

Winterhell

The bottom of hell is winter;
The snow pit is burning and deep.
The flame of the ice chastises
Souls in unmerciful sleep.
The icicles, paralyzed lightning,
Flash out like cruel arrows in flight;
The fire darts quick to discover
The damned in the cold, frozen night.
Snowflakes, scorching embers in darkness,
Fall on the frost-tempered scene,
Over the live bodies lifeless.
The stiff-shadowed haunt-voices scream.
Congealed tears beat down on the doomed ones;
No warmth in this wasteland. The fell
Eternal death-dread as in life lost:
Frozen mind, frozen heart – frozen hell.

SISTER MARY SHAWNA, SND

Surrealism

Oil built on oil to form shape
unshaped shadows arrayed in thickset swirl
turn twist ooze to a head then hurl
muscles of leg and arm to escape
color. Eye-held like filings on magnet make
bodies overlap in whipped whirl
pools of motion fashion figures curl
to a still held shape then bifurcate

out to frames edge rebound back
to still bodies of oiled orange color
reaching into color forming eyes to see
alive those alive living now in black
eyes as one day rescued human color
in still motion alive quiet be.

SR. EUGENE FRANCIS, CSJ

That Piece of Green-Colored Glass: A Fable

KATHLEEN R. JOHNSON

I am a piece of green colored glass – don't really have a name; everybody just calls me 'that piece of green colored glass.' But I guess a name isn't so very important. When I was younger, I was much bigger and everyone called me 'Coca Cola Bottle.' I was really happy then and proud of what I had made of myself in my lifetime up to then, which was about ten years in glass life. It hadn't been an easy road, believe me. I had started out as a mint jelly jar and you know how that is – stuck in the back of a smelly, old refrigerator next to dill pickles and horseradish. The only time I was able to socialize was when my boss served lamb! Well, It didn't take me long to realize that I wasn't fulfilling my real goal in life.

After my job as mint jelly jar expired, I decided to enter a more adventurous field. I hitched a ride in the back of Sam's garbage truck and went down to the bottle factory on 42nd Street. After extensive training, I finally emerged as "Coca Cola Bottle." It took a long time because they really had to reshape my personality – I had become very shy and self-conscious as a mint jelly jar and you don't grow confidence over night. But I finally graduated to the rank of "Coca Cola Bottle" and I was the most polished bottle in the class.

My first job as Coca Cola Bottle took me to a home on Sunnyslope Drive. At first, I started out in a musty, old cabinet in the kitchen. It probably sounds awful, but after that refrigerator it was glass heaven. I met all kinds of interesting bottles there – ketchup bottle, quinine water bottle, alka-seltzer bottle – you know, the kind of bottles that really get around. I even met a couple of cans of peanuts and a jar of stuffed olives, but they didn't stay around too long. Anyway, I really enjoyed working

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with all those bottles and learning all about their exciting careers. I got a little conceited in that cabinet, though, because I was the most popular with the boss, alka-seltzer bottle taking a strong second lead. A day didn't go by that my boss didn't pull me out of the cabinet for a little drink, and his kids were crazy about me. I really liked it there on Sunnyslope Drive.

About every three days my boss would drop me off at the A & P on the corner where I'd get a ride back to the factory for a refill. Everytime I was at the factory, the manager would ask me to give a speech to the bottles in training to provide a little incentive. They would all stand there at complete attention, their white "Coca Cola" labels glistening on their chests, and gape at the wonders of my life. I always felt like quite a success when I was at the factory, and I guess that helped me too because I always tried harder when I got back to work.

At this point in my career, I wasn't exactly under contract to anyone in particular, but I really enjoyed working for the people on Sunnyslope Drive so I always made an attempt to get a ride back there. Generally, I saw my friends in the cabinet within seventy-two hours of leaving them. But one time I failed to get a ride out there and I ended up at a party on Turnpike Road.

The minute I got to Turnpike I was put on a counter in the den next to a tub of ice-cubes and a very sophisticated bourbon bottle; I was just getting acquainted with this bourbon bottle when my new boss grabbed me from the counter and tossed me through the air to a man on the other side of the room. En route, I began to get very dizzy and then I was so sick that when the man opened my cap, my coca cola exploded in his face. Needless to say, I didn't stay on Turnpike Road very long.

About a week later, after rest and recuperation at the factory, I returned to the company of my cabinet friends on Sunnyslope Drive. Everyone seemed pretty happy to see me, but I noticed they were much more subdued than usual. And then I realized that we had a new member in our midst, a tall bottle similar to the one I had met on Turnpike Road. But this bourbon bottle was even more sophisticated and he appeared to be quite indignant about having to share living quarters with the rest of us. He stood in the corner by hin self for three days without saying a word to me.

To make a long story shorter, after I broke the ice, bourbon bottle and I got to be pretty good friends. I enjoyed his stories so much that I actually began to get annoyed when my boss would pull me out for a little drink; my work really began to slack off. Up until now, bourbon bottle had been working on the bar in the den and from what I could gather, *that* was where all the action was. Unfortunately, someone had mistakenly

put him in the cabinet after dragging him all through the house and for a swim in the pool one night so he was stuck with us until they came for him. I really admired bourbon bottle; he never once lost his confidence about being reinstated to his place at the bar. And, sure enough, my boss finally pulled him out and almost apologized to him for misplacing him. I was really glad for bourbon bottle, but I missed him a great deal – ketchup bottle and alka-seltzer bottle didn't seem as exciting to me anymore.

I guess bourbon bottle missed me too because one day not long after he had left my boss took me out of the cabinet and put me next to him on the bar. That was, of course, the peak of my career; there's no higher place for a bottle to go than to the bar! Bourbon bottle and I reigned supreme for about twelve glass years. And we had the time of our lives together. I guess I made about five trips a week back and forth to the factory for refills, I was that busy. And most important, I became quite chummy with scotch bottle, vodka bottle, gin bottle – every bottle who was any bottle in the business.

In all these years, I had received the most desirable treatment any bottle could wish for from my boss. He always handled me gently, never let me slip, and above all, he never tossed me through the air. But luck is never constant and mine was no exception. Last New Year's Eve my boss got a little over-excited, grabbed for me and knocked me down on the terrazza slabs around the bar. I broke into a million little pieces, my neck flying to the left, my bottom flying to the right, my coca cola badge becoming splinters of white on green all over the floor. The only part of me that remained somewhat intact was my head which rolled under the bar and got stuck in a little corner; and luckily, I was with it at the time of the disaster. You can't imagine how traumatic it was for me to have to sit there in that corner and watch my broken parts being swept into a dustpan and dumped in the trash can. My career, my life!, – everything was over.

I must have sat in that corner for two weeks just moping around before anyone found me. One afternoon I was crying a lot and feeling pretty sorry for myself when I looked up and saw my boss's little kid staring at me on her hands and knees. She stayed like that for quite awhile, just staring, and finally her mouth dropped open and I saw a hand coming at me. I closed my eyes thinking she was going to finish me off by dumping me in the trash can; but then I felt her holding me gently so I took a look and she was smiling at me. That made me feel pretty good so I gave her my best smile back and all of a sudden I was being rushed down a long hall and into a little room in the back of the house. I took a quick look around; there were piles of junk scattered all over the room –

rocks, battered tin cans, pieces of bright colored crepe paper, string, even some caps from coca cola bottles. There was a big table in the corner near a window and on it was a big piece of cardboard and some more junk. Next to that was the biggest glue jar I ever saw.

That night I went through some training that I never knew existed before; it was nothing at all like the coca cola bottle training I had had. My boss's kid scrubbed me with soap and hot water, polished me up until I shone so brightly I had to keep my eyes shut, plastered me with a few shiny sequins and then lathered me in a bath of glue. Then came the hardest part; she pressed me onto the cardboard so hard that I thought I was going to die. But when she took her hand away I looked around and there was one of my old caps next to me on one side, a piece of string above me, and old bourbon bottle's neck on my other side. It was just like old home week. We just sat there on the cardboard on the table and talked and talked all night; and I guess it was the best night of my life – but the next day and every day since then have been the best days of my life.

Early in the morning the little kid got us up and took us into the living room where she nailed the cardboard to the wall. Then my boss and all his friends came in and I heard them say, "How beautiful, Kelly. Oh, look at that piece of green colored glass; it's gorgeous. Nicest collage I've ever seen."

Well, I don't have a name anymore, but I guess that isn't too very important. I've come a long way from being a mint jelly jar or a coca cola bottle.

The Baker's Brawl

It's upside-down the room again
where we used to gather
each evening for the Baker's Brawl.

Chairs floated
precariously near
the grandma chandelier,
while platters of bread
clattered to the floor in a yeastful heap.

No butter to spread
made the bakers restless
and no doubt caused many a war
until we could afford margarine.

And now once again
the birds have picked the basket clean
and the grandma chandelier
rattles like wind chimes
impatient for the company of a chair.

SISTER MARY SHAWNA, SND

Lost

In the wilderness
We often walk unknown paths
And meet each other.

SISTER MARY SHAWNA, SND

Discovery

Now,
with live green gifts
for you, and
shining
sunny lemon smiles, or
telling
orange brocaded thoughts;
now,
remembering
golden days
into your ears,
offering
stolen bits from
former lilac loves,
stretching
anxious fingers
to gather
a crimson touch;
now,
I know the why
of my many-hued
before.

KATHRYN WHITING

The Undoing of Arnold

KATHLEEN JOHNSON

I suppose you're wondering why Arnold is walking around without any tail feathers. Well, to be honest with you, I ate them. Of course, Howard doesn't know that; if he did he'd probably send me to the pound, but that's what happened. When I did it, I was so fed up, I almost made a meal out of Arnold, but I remembered just in time that fowl bones get stuck in my throat – so I just gave Arnold a good scare. Actually Arnold is pretty lucky; if I hadn't done what I did, someone else less rational than myself might have ignored the possibility of rooster bones stuck in the throat and that would have been the end of Arnold.

You see, before I ever even saw Arnold, I knew he was going to be a problem. I was lying on my back under the porch one day chomping on a ham bone when Howard called me:

"Lancelot, here Lancelot. Come here, boy. I want you to meet Arnold."

Right away I sensed something was wrong. I'd been on this farm for fifteen years with Howard and never once in all that time had he ever referred to me as "boy" – until that day he brought Arnold home. The instant I heard those condescending words, I realized that Howard was in trouble.

"Lancelot, where the hell are you? Come on over here. You just ain't gonna believe this Arnold."

Fifteen years of observation from under this porch has given me a great deal of insight into life – animal and human. Most of the time Howard was pretty smart, but every now and then, his human faults would get the better of him and he would allow his emotions to guide him without fully taking stock of the situation. I had watched him do this I don't

know how many times, and I usually tried to straighten him out, but this time I decided to try a little reverse psychology on him.

Condescending to Howard's expectations, I dropped my ham bone, rolled over and eased my way out from under the porch. Right away I turned on the old tail-wagging bit and galloped over to Howard to plant a juicy lick on his face; he loved that. Then I settled down and gave this Arnold the once over.

About two pounds of banty rooster stood before me, legs planted defiantly apart, red and green tail feathers pointing to the clouds, and head cocked to one side with such unjustified dignity as I'd ever seen. He stared at me with unblinking proud black eyes so I stared back – there was instant hatred between us. Then I obliged Howard's hopes once again – I allowed my ears to relax, put the tail to work again and approached the rooster for a sniff; Arnold didn't budge – in fact, he remained so rigid that it was difficult to even smell him. When I was finally satisfied that his natural odor coincided with my preconceived notion of impending trouble, I resumed my place next to Howard and calmly waited.

"Arnold, this is Lancelot. Lancelot, Arnold. Now I hope you two will be good friends."

Arnold and I just stared at each other, radiating hate. I looked at Howard; he was so excited about Arnold that I was almost embarrassed for him. He had a grin from sideburn to sideburn plastered across his face and his eyes were sparkling; I hadn't seen him look that way since Eula Mae Prentis had made eyes at him at the square dance three years ago. Well, he was just so happy about Arnold that I didn't have the heart to do anything but go along with him. Besides a rooster couldn't cause as much trouble as Eula Mae Prentis.

"Lancelot, just watch this . . . Arnold, roll over, . . . come on, Arnold, play dead."

Arnold gave me a haughty look, lifted his left leg, leaned to the right and fell over on his back, his head limp and his legs glued to space. Howard was ecstatic; he went into a violent rage of laughter, applauding madly in between. "Beautiful, Arnold" and "You're a genius, Arnold." When he calmed down again, he looked at me just standing there doing nothing, so I compromised my beliefs once again and gave a weak bark of approval; but deep down inside I was feeling a little sick.

Arnold smugly hopped to his feet again, his tail feathers automatically resuming their perpendicular position to his torso, and then he strutted past me, his beak in the air, and nonchalantly followed Howard into the house. I figured my best bet was to stay away from Arnold until he came to his senses, so I returned to my place under the porch and found consolation in a freshly unearthed beef bone.

The next morning I was feeling pretty low: about seven o'clock the kitchen door opened and out flew some breakfast scraps that had a peculiar rooster smell to them. I ignored the gesture and trudged down to the lake for a drink. On the way back I passed the kitchen window and there was Arnold, of all things, sitting on about five telephone books in Howard's place at the table. He was shooting eyefulls of superiority at me through the window so I scrambled under the porch, dug up my most precious steak bone and headed for town.

I got back about three days later – and decided the best thing to do was to confront Arnold and try to be friends with him, for Howard's sake. I walked right in the front door and there was Howard sitting in his rocker by the picture window with Arnold on his lap! They both kind of glanced up at the sound of the door and Howard said, "Oh, hi Lancelot. You're sure a sight for sore eyes." Then he resumed reading his book of Aesop's fables to Arnold, who stuck his beak up at me and continued listening. Well, I was a little put out to say the least, but I decided to stick around; I for sure didn't want that rooster to know that he was getting to me. I lay down by the fire and glared at them out of the corner of my eye; but I was so weary that I fell asleep.

When I woke up it was pitch black outside, the fire was almost out and the house was quiet; Arnold was nowhere to be seen and I was beginning to think that maybe the whole thing about him was just a bad nightmare. I got up, stretched my legs and started out the door, but a strong gale of wind pushed me back. Sometimes when it was cold like that Howard let me sleep at the foot of his bed. I could hear him snoring as I sauntered down the hall to his room, and I was really looking forward to that nice warm bed. I turned a sharp corner into his room and made a blind plunge onto the end of the bed. All of a sudden I heard the most ungodly shriek ever; the light went on in a flash and there was Arnold staring at me, his eyes bulging and his head throbbing. I looked around and saw that Howard was staring at me in much the same fashion; and then I realized that my nose was covered with a smattering of tickly feathers from Arnold's chest.

"What the hell are you doing in here, Lancelot? Are you trying to hurt little Arnold? Why, I oughta whip you. What's got into ya' lately? You been acting like a maniac ever since Arnold got here. Now get the hell off this bed and go outside where you belong. One more stunt like this and you're goin' to the pound."

Needless to say, my ears went down, my tail automatically cowered between my legs and I hightailed it out of there as fast as I could. After a good cry under the porch, I relaxed a little and dug up my old ham bone. While I was munching on my bone, I realized that the next day was Sun-

day; Howard never stayed mad at anybody on Sunday, and maybe, just maybe, Arnold and I could come to a truce.

Well, even God doesn't get up at five o'clock on a Sunday morning! I was stretched out on my back sound asleep – you know how I mean, visions of beef bones floating before me – when I heard the most obnoxious cock-a-doodle-dee in the world. I was so startled that before I could gather my senses, I bounced up and rammed my head into the porch post next to my bone grave. In fifteen years, I'd never once hit my head on that post – but I guess it knocked some sense into me.

I calmed down to a subdued rage, plopped down on my stomach, my head flat on the ground and surveyed the situation. Arnold was planted right in my line of vision, his legs far apart and his eyes just begging for my next move. Quick as a thunderbolt, I bounded out after him howling my head off. In a second, I was almost on top of him and it seemed as though he wasn't going to give me much of a fight. I could see that he was panicked, but he was barely moving. He did an about face, worked his wings up to a good flap – and ran! For all his high-strung tricks, he didn't seem to know how to fly, or else he had forgotten. Just as my teeth were about to clamp down on two pounds of feathers, I felt a lump in my throat, but I screeched to a halt within a breath of Arnold's behind – and extracted his beautiful now drooping red and green tail feathers. Arnold came to a dead stop, looked at his bare bottom and proceeded to run round and round like a checken with his head cut off; finally he let out one obscene shriek and disappeared into the barnyard.

That afternoon I was lying at Howard's feet as he sat in his rocker on the porch reading from Aesop's fables. He put the book down for a minute and looked at me.

"You know, Lancelot, I didn't mean to get so mad at you last night, but you were pretty mean to Arnold. I feel sorry for him; he just isn't like other roosters, and I was hoping that being here with us at the farm would kind of liven him up and make him come round. Maybe it will yet. I wonder where he is now. This is the first time that he's even ventured off on his own."

That was all that Howard ever said to me about Arnold. When the rooster appeared about a week later, Howard never even questioned his missing tail feathers; he just smiled at Arnold and gave me a pat on the head. Oh, yeah, Arnold was kind of sore at me at first, but deep down I think he's kind of proud of his bare bottom. He's about the best friend I've got now (except for Howard, of course) and he's the only rooster I ever met who can fly without his tail feathers.

Apology

I have a wall that's brown and green.
It's high and smooth and hides
A house you've never seen.

There are no windows in my wall,
And few have ever been inside
The gate that's heavy locked and tall.

No doorman's at the gate to let me know
Who wants to come inside.
Some try to climb; some simply turn and go.

I didn't mean to have you fall.
But you should have known
My wall's too high for you to climb alone.

KATHRYN WHITING

Conversation

A small warm bird
crawled sparrowlike in
under my chin from
the drops of rain. Absurb
for we kept
each other company
hiding in the boards
of a ruin except
he would talk
and I would answer
as do grey ladies
spinning flocked
memories over
hot tea cups
spiced with oranges
and green clover.

CHRISTA MAINZER

NO SMOKING PLEASE

Grey-haired pulled-together type
framed in white.
Sounds in stereo soothe
as I walk in and

PLEASE CHECK WITH RECEPTIONIST
WHEN ARRIVING

Hello, Julie
I said no, I'm Laura.
Of course, she said and pulled my file.

IT IS CUSTOMARY
TO PAY FOR PROFESSIONAL
SERVICES WHEN RENDERED.
ANY OTHER ARRANGEMENTS
MUST BE MADE IN ADVANCE.

Plastic flowers hanging from ceiling
in strategic spot,
green pale orange and blue

Aqua cool carpet reflecting
drapes, couch and chair
in shades of greenblue

PARENTS: PLEASE REMAIN IN
WAITING ROOM WHILE YOUR
CHILD IS BEING EXAMINED AND
TREATED. THANK YOU.

Seagulls and sun and solitary boat
on walnut-paneled wall and
horizon life and
sunset
neatly arranged on opposite wall
and
drills in steady hum above
soothing sounds in stereo.

PALMA NITTI

Atlantic Honors

HONORABLE MENTION

Cathy Herdering	Poem:	*Jungle Lamp for Eva*
Teresa Keeler	Essay:	*Death of Cather's Professor*

MERIT PAPERS

Sr. Mary Shawna Kidwell, SND	Poem:	*Heron Feet*
Christa Mainzer	Poem:	*Mine*
Hetty Wilkie	Poem:	*Beast Echoes*
Kathleen Johnson	Poem:	*If You Could*
Kathleen Johnson	Story:	*In a Shaded Eye*
Janet Wolff	Essay:	*A Light Shining in Darkness*
Clare Collins	Essay:	*Sterility and Dryness in the Waste Land*
Carol Laderer	Essay:	*Firmer than All Rocks*
Elynor Ruffo	Essay:	*Olav's Silences*
Sr. Carla Mary Wright, SSL	Essay:	*Images of Stone*

Cabrini Awards

SHORT STORIES

First Prize

Hetty Wilkie	*Precipice*

ESSAYS

First Prize

Theresa Kuenn	*And Shame the Devil*

Second Prize

Mary Barnidge	*Death and Resurrection in Crime and Punishment and Brothers Karamazov*

POETRY

First Prize

Sr. Mary Shawna Kidwell, SND	*Heron Feet*

Second Prize

Palma Nitti	*A Remembrance of What Might Have Been*

Third Prize

Kathleen Johnson	*I Can't Forget*

HONORABLE MENTION

Shelley Cavanaugh	Story:	*The Memory*
Rita Elaine Perez	Story:	*The Amigos*
Margaret McClean	Essay:	*Word Has It*
Kathleen Johnson	Essay:	*That Piece of Green-Colored Glass*
Laurie Brass	Poem:	*Marketday*

MOUNT
ON TWO CAMPUSES
MOUNT ST. MARY'S COLLEGE in Los Angeles